

LIVE MASTODONS.

Credible Witnesses Say They Can Be Found in Alaska.

ONE OF THE WONDERS OF A MOST WONDERFUL COUNTRY.

Two of the Mammoths Recently Killed by Indians—Other Marvels of Our Strange Northern Country—A Talk With a Long Time Resident There.

"When the late Secretary Seward purchased the big slice of North America now known as the Territory of Alaska from the Russian government he was the but of a great deal of newspaper chaff."

This was the preliminary observation of Colonel C. F. Fowler, late of the Alaska Fur and Commercial Company, in conversation with a Philadelphia Inquirer reporter, about that marvelous strip of Uncle Sam's territory, which is just beginning to attract the attention of capitalists as a good field for investment. Colonel Fowler is stopping temporarily in Philadelphia with friends. He is en route to his old home near Boston, from which he has been absent for the past quarter of a century, more than half of that time having been spent in Alaska.

"Alaska is a country of paradoxes," continued the Colonel. "During the past fourteen years, up to two months ago, when I resigned, and started back to visit my old home, I have had my headquarters at Kodiak, which is the most northern station occupied by agents of our company. Our headquarters are in San Francisco, but we have trading stations all over Secretary Seward's purchase. As yet Alaska is almost a terra incognita. The country immediately surrounding some of the principal rivers like the Yukon, Snake and Stikine has been explored, and a few miles inland from the coast line, but the great interior is almost unknown. What we have learned of it is a surprise, and prompted me to say that it is a country of paradoxes."

MISAPPREHENSIONS.

"You who live here in the states look upon it as a land of perpetual ice and snow, and yet you would be astonished if I told you that I grew the past summer in my garden at Kodiak abundant crops of radishes, lettuce, carrots, onions, cauliflowers, cabbage, peas, turnips, potatoes, beets, parsnips, and celery. Within five miles of this garden is one of the largest glaciers in Alaska and between the fertile coast strip and the interior is reared along the entire sea boundary a continuous mountain of perpetual ice and snow."

"During your long residence in Alaska what was the most wonderful thing you saw or heard?" asked the reporter.

The Colonel smiled at this question, and after a moment's thought said: "Two years ago I left Kodiak on a trip to the head waters of the Snake River, where our traveling agents had established a trading station at an Innuit village. The chief of this family of Innuits was named To-le-ti-ma, and to him I was well recommended. He received me hospitably, and I at once began negotiations for the purchase of a big lot of fossil ivory which his tribe had cached near the village. The lot weighed several thousand pounds, and was composed of the principal and inferior tusks of the mammoth, the remains of thousands of which gigantic animals are to be found in the beds of interior Alaska water courses. I subjected the ivory to a rigid inspection, and upon two of the largest tusks I discovered old blood stains and some shreds of partly decomposed fish."

A DROVE OF MONSTERS.

"I questioned To-le-ti-ma, and he assured me that less than three months before a party of his young men had encountered a drove of the living monsters

about fifty miles above where he was then encamped, and had succeeded in killing two, an old bull and a cow. At my request he sent for the leader of the hunting party, a young and very intelligent Indian, and I questioned him closely about his adventures among a race of animals that the scientific people claim is extinct. He told me a very straightforward story, and I have no reason to doubt its truth.

"He and his band were searching along a dry water-course for ivory, and had found a considerable quantity. Suddenly one of the bucks, who was in advance rushed in upon the main body with the startling intelligence that at a spring of water about a mile above where they then were he had discovered the 'sign' of several of the 'big teeth.' They had come down to the spring to drink from a lofty plateau further inland and had evidently fed in the vicinity of the water for some time. The chief immediately held a council of war with his principal men and the whole party under the leadership of the scout cautiously approached the spring.

"They had nearly reached it when their ears were suddenly saluted by a chorus of loud trumpet-like calls and an enormous creature came crashing toward them through the thicket the ground fairly trembling beneath his ponderous footsteps. With wild cries of terror and dismay the Indians fled all but the chief and the scout who had first discovered the trail of the monsters. They were armed with muskets of large caliber and stood their ground, opening fire on the mammoth. A bullet must have penetrated the creature's brain, for it staggered forward and fell dead. Subsequently, on their way back to their camp ground they overhauled and killed a cow 'big teeth,' which was evidently the mate of the first one killed.

WHAT THE INDIAN DREW.

"I asked the hunter to describe the monster, and, taking a sharp stick, he drew me a picture of the male animal in the soft clay. According to his description, it was at least twenty feet in height and thirty feet in length. In general shape it was not unlike an elephant, but its ears were smaller, its eyes bigger, and its trunk longer and more slender. Its tusks were yellowish-white in color, and six in number. Four of these tusks were placed like those of a bear, one on either side in each jaw; they were about four feet long and came to a sharp point. The other two tusks the Indians brought away. I measured them and they were over fifteen feet in length, and weighed upward of 250 pounds each. They gradually tapered to a sharp point, and curved inward. The monster's body, according to the Indians, was covered with long, coarse hair of a reddish dun color.

"By the way," continued Colonel Fowler, "when Alfred P. Swinford was Governor of Alaska, he made a very careful investigation of the reports of living mammoths, made by the Indians, and after thoroughly sifting the native testimony, he felt certain that large herds of these monsters are still to be found on the high plateaus in interior Alaska, about the head waters of the Snake River, and he incorporated this opinion in one of his reports to the government."

RESOURCES.

Continuing, the Colonel branched out into an enthusiastic description of Alaska, its resources and possibilities, in the course of which he said: "I have been into the interior some, and its developments were astonishing. The timber is almost inexhaustible. There are immense and as yet unworked fields in gold, silver, coal, and salt, and the meadow lands along the rivers are thickly carpeted with a luxuriant growth of blue-joint grass, which affords excellent pasturage during the spring and summer months, and can be converted into most excellent hay. The timber trees grow to an immense size and I have seen common alders that measured sixteen inches in diameter. Our spring and fall seasons are mild and balmy; the summers are hot and the winters are not as cold as they are in Dakota. Mining in Alaska is yet in its infancy. Gold was first discovered in 1871, by a soldier name Doyle, just above Sitka. On the 9th of December, 1872, the first blast ever made in the territory for ore was touched off back of Silver Bay, ten miles above Sitka. The fur and fishing interests, both along the coast and in the interior, are not more than half worked. Nearly every fur-bearing animal known to commerce is to be found in Alaska, and her coast waters and inland streams are alive with salmon, black cod, halibut, sturgeon, and trout. On the big interior plateaus there are thousands of wild goats and big horn sheep to be found, besides countless droves of elk, wapiti, and reindeer."

"How about the Indians?" "The Alaska Indians, as a usual thing, are peaceable and inoffensive. That is their natural condition. Contact with civilization I am sorry to say has not improved them morally or physically. Some of the interior tribes are cannibals and the women all practice infanticide. The Innuits live very comfortably in rock houses or topeks built of spruce logs fastened together without nails or pins and about twelve or fifteen feet square. The entrance door is a small hole through which one must enter on the hands and knees. Bear or deer skin matings are hung before the entrance to exclude the air. Outside of the entrance in winter is a passage way under the snow which leads to a small shed built at the surface of the ground. All the coast Indians speak a mongrel tongue called Chitook but the language of the interior Indians is known as Umaliet."

LATE NEWS OF MASTODONS.

Regarding this monster a copy of the Alaska News which has just been received says: "We learned that the existence of living mastodons near the headwaters of White River was not the more fabrications of the Northern furriers, but that the Stikine Indians had positively seen such animal. One of the Indians said that, while hunting one day in that unknown section, he came across an immense track, sunk to a depth of several inches in the moss, and from the description as the Indian marked it out to him in the sand, it much resembled an elephant's track, and was larger around than a barrel. Upon striking it, the Indian followed up this curious trail which to all appearances was very fresh, and, tracking from one immense stride to the other for a distance of some miles he came in full view of his game. And what game! The hunter gave one look, then turned and fled as though pursued by the evil one."

These Indians, as a class, are the bravest of hunters, and, with no other weapon than the spear, will attack and slay the St. Elias grizzly. But the immense proportions of this new kind of game both startled and filled the hunter, brave as he was with great fear, and he imagined his only safety lay in swift and immediate flight. He described it as being larger than Harper's (the post trader's) store, with great, shining, yellowish tusks, and a mouth large enough to swallow him at a single gulp. He said the animal was undoubtedly the same as were the huge bones scattered over that section. If such an animal is now in existence, and there is no reason to doubt the veracity of the Indian, as other Indians, and also Mr. Harper, have confirmed it, they inhabit a section of very high altitude, and one but rarely visited by human beings, and those only Indians. We also have no reason to doubt the Indian's tale, for at no very distant period the Yukon country was inhabited by these animals, and hundreds of their massive skeletons found strewn along the creeks are the silent but truthful witnesses. On Forty Mile Creek bones can be found projecting partly from the sand and among the driftwood along the stream. On a creek below this these skeletons are quite numerous. One ivory tusk projects nine feet out of a sand bank, and is larger around than a man's body. A single tooth would be a good load for a strong man to carry. This certainly would be a great field for the scientist, for, to all appearances, it is rich in nature's curiosities.

Told by Napoleon's Valet. Much has been written concerning the scanty knowledge of court etiquette shown by Napoleon during the early days of the first empire and of the awkwardness of his companions in arms, who, from being mere soldiers of fortune, were elevated to the highest posts in the country. In later days, however, the emperor himself became a martinet on the subject of the observance of courtly ceremonies. When staying at Bayona, in 1808, Constant relates that everybody was struck by the awkwardness of the king and queen of Spain, the bad taste shown by their dress, the disgracefully shabby state of their equipages and the heavy, constrained air of all those who formed their suit.

"French elegance and all our handsome court equipages formed such a sharp contrast that the dowdiness of the Spanish became unaccountably absurd. The emperor, with his exquisite tact, did not fail to notice this, but he did not like the idea of letting crowned heads be a subject for raillery. One day, when dressing, he pinched my ear and said to me: 'I say, you rogue, you understand all that sort of thing so well, so you might as well give the valets of the king and queen of Spain a hint or two. Their awkwardness is positively pitiable.' I eagerly offered to carry out his majesty's wishes, but he did not let the matter stop there, but made certain observations to the empress about the queen of Spain and her ladies." Josephine, the very embodiment of good taste, accordingly gave certain orders, and for two days her hairdressers and dressmakers spent their whole time in giving lessons to their Spanish colleagues in the art of tasteful and elegant dressing. This only shows that the emperor found time for everything—time to plan a battle or teach a footman how to dress.—Philadelphia Telegraph.

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